

IV

RANGING TO THE SOUTH

On the morning of January 8, 1802, after more than a week's voyage through storm and sunshine, mostly storm, from New York, Lorenzo Dow, apparently in failing health and with great anxiety of mind about his reception in the South, to which he was a stranger, landed in Savannah, Georgia, to begin his career as a traveling evangelist; or to be a bit more specific, to range at large and preach the gospel in his own inimitable way.

What a fascination Georgia seemed to have had for the early Methodists; particularly, those who afterward attained to eminence! Both John and Charles Wesley tried their apprenticed hands on Georgia. At the very time that the Wesleys returned to England with an abiding consciousness that their visit had been an unqualified failure, George Whitfield, twenty-two years of age, sailed to the American shores to try the powers of his matchless eloquence upon the inhabitants of that Southern colony. Now, as Lorenzo Dow discards circuit boundaries—to him unbearable restrictions—to range at large over the continent, Georgia becomes his first objective in that career destined to give him eminence in early American history.

Being among strangers, without money and in precarious health, a cemetery with gate broken down, seemed to invite the disconsolate traveler to come in and tarry a while, if not permanently. Consequently, Dow turned in, kneeled down, thanked God for a safe voyage and earnestly sought His guidance and help for the future, that appeared to him anything but radiant.

After an hour or so in thanksgiving and prayer to Almighty God, the devout stranger left the cemetery in